



GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Performance Evaluation System Letter of Warning Template Instructions

PURPOSE

The Performance Evaluation System (PES), a system for the appraisal of employee work performance, was established to promote the effective and economical operation of the District government. While the vast majority of employees receive "Satisfactory" performance ratings or better, there are instances when employees consistently fail to meet the performance expectations of their position. In these cases, it is important for supervisors to take the necessary steps to help these employees improve and to remove them from the workforce if their performance does not improve.

The purpose of the *Letter of Warning* is to ensure that an employee whose job performance fails to meet the minimum requirements of the position is given a fair opportunity to improve his/her performance before the employee receives an "Unsatisfactory" rating. Since an "Unsatisfactory" rating may carry negative consequences, including demotion, removal, or a delayed salary step increase, it is essential that a supervisor who decides to begin this process follow the procedures outlined in Part II of Chapter 14 of the District Personnel Manual (DPM) very closely. The following *Letter of Warning* template is provided to help supervisors comply with these procedures.

TIME CONSIDERATIONS

According to the DPM, no employee may receive an "Unsatisfactory" performance rating without first receiving a *Letter of Warning*. The DPM also states that the employee must be served with a *Letter of Warning* some time **between October 1 and December 31**. This is to ensure that the employee is provided with at least 90 days to bring his/her performance up to a "Satisfactory" level before the rating period ends on **March 31**. If a supervisor fails to provide an employee with a *Letter of Warning* during this three-month period then the employee must be given a *Letter of Warning* with *Postponement of Rating* by **close of business on March 31**, otherwise the employee will automatically receive a "Satisfactory" rating.

The *Letter of Warning* with *Postponement of Rating* delays the employee's official evaluation to ensure that he/she is given at least 90 days to improve performance. Postponed evaluations may be conducted at any time during April, May, or June, provided that 90 days have passed since the *Letter of Warning* with *Postponement of Rating* was given to the employee. All postponed evaluations must be completed by **June 30**.

UNOFFICIAL REPORT OF PERFORMANCE RATING INSTRUCTIONS

A *Letter of Warning* must be accompanied by an unscheduled/unofficial *Report of Performance Rating* (P.O. Form 12). In order to produce a valid unofficial *Report of Performance Rating* (P.O. Form 12) it is strongly recommended that supervisors use the *Performance Rating Worksheet* as they complete the unofficial evaluation to determine if the employee falls below the minimum requirements for "Satisfactory" performance as they are described in subpart 2.5 D. of Chapter 14 Part II of the DPM.

1. Complete the employee information section as follows:
 - 1) **Employee's Name:** Last, First, and Middle Initial.
 - 2) **Title:** Provide the employee's position title.
 - 3) **Grade/Step:** Provide the employee's current grade and step.
 - 4) **Rating Period:** Provide the rating period dates.
 - 5) **Agency:** Provide the agency name and agency code.
 - 6) **Date Completed:** Indicate the date that the report was completed.
 - 7) **Type of Report:** Indicate that the report is an Unscheduled/Unofficial Rating.
 - 8) **Dates Supervised:** Provide the first date in the rating period that the employee was supervised by the rating official.
 - 9) **Type of position:** Indicate if the position is Full-Time, Part-Time, Full-Time Temporary, Part-Time Temporary, or WAE/Intermittent.
2. On the *Report of Performance Rating* (P.O. Form 12), underline all of the sub-factors that are relevant to the employee's position.
3. On the *Report of Performance Rating* (P.O. Form 12), rate the employee's performance for each of the underlined items using the following symbols:
 - a. A plus sign (+) indicates that the employee is strong in a sub-factor.
 - b. A check sign (√) indicates that the employee's performance is acceptable in a sub-factor.
 - c. A minus sign (-) indicates that the employee needs improvement in a sub-factor.



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4. Use the *Performance Evaluation Worksheet* to determine if the employee should receive an “Unsatisfactory” performance rating. **In order to be considered “Unsatisfactory,” the employee must receive a minus sign (-) on least 50% sub-factors that are relevant to his/her position.**
5. If the rating meets these requirements, complete the *Letter of Warning* template and attach a copy of the unofficial *Report of Performance Rating* (P.O. Form 12).

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE LETTER OF WARNING TEMPLATE

After you have completed the unofficial performance evaluation, you are ready to draft the *Letter of Warning*. In order to produce a valid *Letter of Warning*, you must complete each of the following steps:

1. Complete the employee information section at the top of the page so that it matches the unofficial *Report of Performance Rating* (P.O. Form 12).
2. Next to “Date Issued,” provide the date that the *Letter of Warning* will be given to the employee.
3. In the left-hand column of the box in the center of the *Letter of Warning* template, place a mark next to each rating sub-factor that was rated with a minus sign (-) on the unofficial performance rating.
4. In the center column of the box, explain in detail what the employee can do to bring his/her performance up to a satisfactory level.
5. In the right-hand column of the box, explain what types of assistance will be provided to the employee to help him/her to improve performance.
6. Sign the *Letter of Warning*.
7. Photocopy the unofficial *Report of Performance Rating* (P.O. Form 12) and *Letter of Warning* for your records.
8. Meet with the employee so that you may provide him/her with the unofficial *Report of Performance Rating* (P.O. Form 12) and the *Letter of Warning* and discuss performance expectations.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE POSTPONEMENT OF RATING ADDENDUM

In the event the supervisor was unable to provide the employee with a *Letter of Warning* between October 1 and December 31, he or she **cannot** give the employee an “Unsatisfactory” rating unless the supervisor postpones the employee’s official rating and provides the employee with a **three (3) to six (6) month** long opportunity to improve performance. The *Postponement of Rating* cannot go beyond **June 30**, so it is essential that the employee receive the *Letter of Warning* with *Postponement of Rating* no later than **March 31**. In order to produce a valid *Postponement of Rating*, you must complete each of the following steps:

1. Complete the unofficial *Report of Performance Rating* (P.O. Form 12) and the *Letter of Warning* template according to the instructions in the preceding section.
2. Under the *Postponement of Rating* addendum section at the bottom of the *Letter of Warning* template, mark the box and fill in the appropriate dates.
3. Photocopy the unofficial *Report of Performance Rating* (P.O. Form 12) and *Letter of Warning* with *Postponement of Rating* for your records.
4. Meet with the employee so that you may provide him/her with copies of the unofficial *Report of Performance Rating* (P.O. Form 12) and the *Letter of Warning* with *Postponement of Rating* and discuss performance expectations.